

a time in Alderney and subsequently in Belfast until his retirement, when he settled down in the eastern counties for the remainder of his life.

Butler was an extremely good field-ornithologist, with a wonderful "eye for a bird," instantly recognizing any species he had previously met with at the merest glimpse of it, and at almost any distance. He was a very keen sportsman, an untiring walker, and a capital shot. The many beautifully prepared bird-skins which he collected in his time remain in the Natural History Museum. A remarkably little-known owl, *Asio butleri* Hume, perpetuates his name in ornithology, but the Pipit, *Anthus butleri*, which Dr. Sharpe named after him, has since proved to be only the fully-plumaged male of *Anthus chloris*.

He married in 1872 Clara, second daughter of the late General J. T. Francis, Bombay Staff Corps. Her death in 1912 was a great blow to him, and after it he became somewhat of a recluse, busying himself with his garden and his collections, and going about very little. He leaves three sons—Arthur Lennox, until lately Superintendent of Game Preservation in the Sudan, who has inherited his father's interest in ornithology and has been a Member of the Union since 1899, Charles Edward, and Harry Francis.—A. L. B.

### XXXIII.—Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.

#### *Bangs on the Bahaman Mocking-bird.*

[The smaller Mocking-bird of the Northern Bahamas. By Outram Bangs. Proc. New England Zoölogical Club, vi. 1916, p. 23.]

This bird, formerly considered identical with the widely-spread Mocking-bird of the United States, is here described as a new subspecies under the name *Mimus polyglottos delenificus*. It is found only on the northern island of the Bahama group, its place on the southern islands being taken by *M. p. elegans* Sharpe.

*Berg on the birds of Tåkern Lake.*

[Tåkern, en bok om fåglarnas sjö af Bengt Berg. Pp. 1-475; many photographs. Stockholm (Norstedt), 1913. 8vo.]

Tåkern Lake lies in the centre of southern Sweden, about halfway between Stockholm and Gothenburg in the province of Ostergötland, and appears to be the favourite resort of marsh- and water-birds.

Here Mr. Berg must have spent a great deal of time taking photographs not only of the birds, but also of the scenery and vegetation, and these are all reproduced in the present work and form a most beautiful series of pictures. Almost half the plates and letterpress are taken up with the Swan, presumably *Cygnus olor*, which apparently breeds abundantly on Lake Tåkern. Other birds of which photographs are given are the Sedge- and Reed-Warblers, Marsh-Harrier, Lapwing, Curlew, Kentish Plover, Snipe, Coot, Mallard, Pochard, Black-headed Gull, Tern, and Great Crested Grebe.

The photographs are all reproduced with great skill, and the whole forms a wonderful series of illustrations of the bird-life of Sweden.

*Buturlin on the Nuthatches.*

[A short Review of the Nuthatches (Fam. Sittidæ). By S. A. Buturlin. Trans. Soc. Imp. Nat. Pétrograd, xliv. 1916, pp. 145-173.]

This important paper by Prof. Buturlin is unfortunately published in Russian, but it contains a very full summary in English, so that the more important conclusions can be easily understood. Prof. Buturlin proposes to divide the Nuthatches among twelve different genera and subgenera; of these seven are now introduced for the first time. They are as follows:—*Pæcilositta* for *Sitta azurea* Less., *Cyanositta* for *Dendrophila corallipes* Sharpe, *Arctositta* for *Sitta arctica* But., *Homositta* for *S. castaneiventris* Frankl., *Micrositta* for *S. villosa* Verr., *Leptositta* for *S. leucopsis* Gould, and *Mesositta* for *S. himalayensis* Jard. et Selby.

A key of the structural and other characters by which

the genera are distinguished is given in the English summary.

There are also three new subspecies described:—*S. europæa sakhalinensis*, *S. e. hondoensis*, and *Rupisitta tephronota iranica*, the names of which indicate clearly the localities whence they are derived.

*Cherrie on new South American Birds.*

[Two new Birds from Venezuela. New Birds from the Collection of the Collins-Day Expedition to South America. By George K. Cherrie. Bull. Amer. Mus. N. H., New York, xxxv. 1916, pp. 389-397.]

In the first article are described two new forms of the genera *Hemithraupis* and *Argicus*, obtained by Mr. Klages in Venezuela. In the second article *Taraba major virgultorum*, *Xiphorhynchus guttata rimarum*, *Capito auratus insperatus*, *Piaya rutila chaparensis*, *Hypocnemis collinsi*, *Drymophila phantalis*, all from Bolivia; *Capito dayi*, *Coccomorphus flavus inornata*, *Formicivora rufa chapmani*, from Brazil; and *Piaya rutila orinocensis* from Venezuela, are described as new.

*Ghigi on the Crested Guinea-fowls and on a new Pheasant.*

[Sulle forme orientali del genere *Guttera* Wagler. Alessandro Ghigi. Riv. Ital. Ornit. iii. 1915, pp. 156-170, tav. iii.]

*Hierophasis dissimilis*, nuova forma da mutazione di *H. swinhoii* Gould. Id. ibid. pp. 171-181, tav. iv.]

Some years ago Prof. Ghigi of Bologna described two new forms of the genus *Guttera*. One of these, based on a living example obtained from M. Rambaud of Marseilles, he named *G. barbata*; the second was based on the Crested Guinea-fowl of the Zambesi region, which he separated from that inhabiting Zululand and Natal.

Prof. Ghigi has recently had an opportunity of examining further examples of these two forms living in the Zoological Gardens of Berlin and Hamburg, and he now takes this opportunity of offering a *résumé* of the various forms of the genus inhabiting eastern Africa, with additional descriptions and a key. Altogether, eleven forms are included in the key.

The curious structure of the clavicles, unique among birds, is figured on the plate. The symphysis of the two bones is enlarged and hollowed into a pouch-like structure, compared by the author to the labellum of an orchid. Into this pouch a loop of the greatly elongated trachea is fitted.

The second paper deals with an interesting variation or mutation of Swinhoe's Pheasant, which arose suddenly among some living examples of this bird kept by Prof. Ghigi in 1908, and which have continued to breed in his pheasantries. This race has been named by him *H. dissimilis*.

#### *Hersey on the birds of Alaska.*

[A list of the Birds observed in Alaska and north-eastern Siberia during the summer of 1914. By F. Seymour Hersey. *Smithson. Misc. Coll. Washington*, vol. lxvi. no. 2, pp. 1-33, 1916.]

In the summer of 1914 the author was commissioned by Mr. A. C. Bent to visit Alaska to obtain data, and especially photographs of nesting-birds, for his forthcoming work on the "Life-Histories of North-American Birds."

Leaving Seattle on May 12 he visited Unalaska and Nome, and spent a month at the mouth of the Yukon river. He then made an excursion to Point Barrow and back, where he met and rescued Mr. W. S. Brooks, whose journey has already been noticed in our last number (p. 502). A list of the birds noted and collected is given with localities and indications of their breeding-times, but the details of the observations and the photographs are reserved for Mr. Bent's forthcoming work. As would be expected, most of the birds met with are sea- and shore-birds. Among the rarer and more interesting forms are *Sterna aleutica*, *Polysticta stelleri*, *Somateria spectabilis*, *Arquatella maritima ptilocnemis*, the Humming-bird *Selasporus rufus*, and the Swallow *Hirundo erythrogastra*.

#### *Mathews on the Birds of Australia.*

[The Birds of Australia. By Gregory M. Mathews. Vol. v. pt. 3, pp. 249-352, pls. 255-266. London (Witherby), May 1916. 4to.]

This part is comparatively easy to review, as it only contains three Hawks, three Owls, and the Osprey, all well

known to Australian ornithologists. The Watling drawings here come under consideration again, with the works of Latham, Gmelin and the latter's translator, Kerr; while the life-histories of the birds are even more full and interesting than usual.

We may pass over the Osprey with its one "ill-defined" subspecies, which Mr. Mathews terms *cristatus* (Vicill.), the variable *Cerchneis cenchroides*, of which no subspecies is now admitted, and also *Falco subniger* which he puts under his *Notofalco*, where a supposed Queensland subspecies is suppressed. This takes us to the distinctly Australasian type *Hieracidea*, placed next to *Cerchneis*; the author being very emphatic as to the separation of both from *Falco*. Of this Hawk innumerable variations seem to occur; and, as they overlap in places, we should ourselves have refrained from accepting, or giving, Latin appellations to each, while considering them somewhat erratic manifestations of an extremely variable species, or phases not yet sufficiently fixed to warrant nomenclatural distinction.

It is quite otherwise, however, with *Spiloglaux novæ-zealandiæ*, which may be next considered. Here the races appear well-defined and capable of being geographically separated, while some have been formerly distinguished as species by Gould and other writers. We quite agree with Mr. Mathews that the vast extent of Australia must always be kept in mind; and it will be noticed that in this case the New Zealand bird is considered identical as a species with the Australian, which therefore covers a still wider area.

The subspecies of *Hieracidea berigora* admitted are *orientalis*, *berigora*, *occidentalis*, *melvillensis*, *kempi*, *centralis*, and *tasmanica*: the last three being new. Those of *Spiloglaux* are *novæ-zealandiæ*, *venatica*, *boobook*, *clelandi*, *leachi*, *marmorata*, *albaria*, *royana*, *mixta*, *lurida*, *macgillivrayi*, *everardi* subsp. n., *ocellata*, and *melvillensis*.

*Hieracoglaux connivens* may similarly be subdivided into *peninsularis*, *occidentalis*, *suboccidentalis*, *addenda*, and *connivens*, with *assimilis* and *rufostriata* from the islands north or east of Australia.

Mr. Mathews creates a new genus *Berneyornis* for *H. strenua*, and accepts *Rhabdoglaux*, *Strix*, and *Megastrix* for the remaining Owls of the country; the two latter, however, are not in this part.

Figures are given of two forms in the case of the Kestrel and four in that of the Boobook Owl, which should be found most useful to subsequent workers.

*Mullens and Swann on the Bibliography of British Birds.*

[A Bibliography of British Ornithology from the earliest Times to the End of 1912, including Biographical Accounts of the principal Writers and Bibliographies of their published Works. By W. H. Mullens, M.A., etc., etc., and H. Kirke Swann. Parts i. & ii. pp. 1-240. London (Macmillan), 1916. 8vo. Price, when complete, 36s.]

Mr. Mullens has long been known to us as possessing an unrivalled knowledge of the older authors who have written on British Birds, and is, we believe, the fortunate possessor of a most valuable collection of the older works on the subject. He has now, in collaboration with Mr. Kirke Swann, given us the first instalment of a volume which promises to be a most valuable and instructive one.

So far as we know, the only previous attempt to collect the titles of works relating to British Birds was that of the late Dr. Elliott Coues, who, in the fourth instalment of his Ornithological Bibliography, published in the 'Proceedings of the United States National Museum' in 1879, issued his "Faunal Publications relating to British Birds" (see 'Ibis,' 1881, p. 158). This, however, was admittedly imperfect, and was only intended to serve as a foundation for a larger and more complete work. This, Messrs. Mullens and Kirke Swann, judging by the first part now issued, are now giving us.

It would perhaps have been better to have excluded biographies of living authors from the bibliographical portion. As it is proposed to prepare complete county indices, the papers and works of these living authors might have been included here. There are also a number of authors and works the inclusion of which would be difficult

to justify on the grounds that they added much to our knowledge of British Birds ; but, on the whole, the work, so far as it has gone, is extremely interesting, especially the notices of the older authors—such, for instance, as Richard Carew of East Antonic who flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and wrote on the birds of Cornwall in his survey of that county. Perhaps the earliest writer mentioned is Dame Berners, who is said to have been Prioress of Sopwell Nunnery in Hertfordshire, and is supposed to have written the “Boke of St. Albans,” containing treatises on hawking, first printed at St. Albans in 1486.

Whether intentionally or not, we find no mention of the following modern authors, who appear to have contributed articles to various periodicals of over a page in length :— E. N. Bloomfield, M. Barr, W. Berry, S. E. Brock, J. J. Beeston, and, finally, the Duchess of Bedford, who, one would have thought, well deserved a mention.

We shall look forward to the completion of this work with the greatest pleasure, and shall hope to give it when finished a more extended notice.

### *Ridgway on American Birds.*

[The Birds of North and Middle America : a descriptive catalogue. By Robert Ridgway, Curator, Division of Birds. Part VII. Families Cuculidæ, Psittacidæ, and Columbidae. Pp. xii+543 ; 24 pls. Bulletin of the United States National Museum, no. 50. Washington (Government Printing Office), 1916. 8vo.]

All workers in American ornithology appreciate the great work which Mr. Ridgway has undertaken and which appears volume by volume at intervals of a year or two. The first of these, which was published in 1901, contained an account of the Finches ; the eighth, now in the course of preparation, will contain the Shore-birds, Gulls, and Hawks. Perhaps a ninth will complete the work. Descriptions of all the birds inhabiting the North American continent are given, as well as those of the West Indies and Galapagos. A good number of extralimital species are also included in the keys in order to elucidate the relationships of the North American forms treated of.

The present volume contains the descriptions of 28 Cuckoos, 78 Parrots, and 91 Pigeons, the greater number of which belong to the neotropical section of the avifauna treated of. The United States can hardly claim more than three Cuckoos, one Parrot, and three or four Pigeons, and of these one of the Pigeons is extinct and the Parrot probably so.

Mr. Ridgway recognizes two forms of the Carolina Paroquet: *Conuropsis carolinensis carolinensis*, which formerly inhabited the coastal plain of the United States from Florida to Virginia, occasionally ranging even to New York State, and *C. c. ludoviciana*, formerly inhabiting the Mississippi valley from the Gulf Coast to the southern shores of the great lakes. Of the former Mr. Ridgway writes that it is "so nearly extinct that only a few colonies may yet exist in remote parts of southern Florida"; and of the latter that "if still existing, to be found only in small numbers in south-western Arkansas or north-western Louisiana." The last dated record given for the former is 1901, for the latter 1891.

We fear that the Carolina Paroquet will shortly share the fate of the Passenger Pigeon and the Labrador Duck.

Mr. Ridgway has somewhat modified the general scheme of classification as proposed in the first part of this work, where the "Order Culiciformes included the Parrots as well as the Cuckoo-like birds (Cuculidæ and Musophagidæ), this being in accordance with the views of Gadow and Garrod. The Parrots are, however, so distinct and sharply circumscribed as a group that it seems better to consider them as a separate order." In the same way the Columbiformes, which in the earlier scheme were merged with the Charadriiformes, are here separated into two distinct orders. These changes certainly seem justified in accordance with the views of modern ornithologists.

On the series of twenty-four plates there are outline-drawings of wings, tails, beaks, and feet to illustrate the structural characters, and these will be found most useful aids in the identification of the various genera.



*Salvadori and Festa on Tripolitane Birds.*

[Alcuni uccelli della Cirenaica, colla descrizione di una nuova specie del genere *Caccabis*. Nota di T. Salvadori ed E. Festa. Boll. Mus. Zool. Anat. Comp. Torino, xxxi. 1916, no. 714, pp. 1-2.]

This note contains the names of some twelve species collected by an Italian officer in Cyrenaica and presented to the Turin Museum. The only noteworthy form is a new species or rather subspecies of Red-legged Partridge allied to *Caccabis spatzi* of Tunis and Algeria, but differing in its darker and more bluish throat and chin. Messrs. Salvadori and Festa distinguish this form under the name of *C. callolema*. Four examples of this new Partridge were obtained to the south of Bengasi.

*Stresemann on the Eastern Black Crows.*

[Über die Formen der Gruppe *Corvus coronoides* Vig. & Horsf. Von Erwin Stresemann. Verhandl. Ornith. Ges. Bayern, xii. 1916, pp. 377-404.]

Through a neutral country we have received a copy of Mr. Stresemann's paper on the subspecific forms of the Australian Crow, *Corvus coronoides*.

The investigations on which the work is based were all made in England in 1913-14 on material contained in the British and Tring Museums, and in Mr. G. M. Mathews' collection; to all of whom due acknowledgment is made.

The first portion of the paper contains a review of the various forms of *Corvus coronoides* which, as a species, is spread over the whole of eastern and southern Asia and Australia. Twenty subspecific forms are recognized and three of these are described for the first time—*C. c. connectens*, Loochoo Isls., *C. c. madaraszii*, Ceylon, and *C. c. hainanus*, Hainan.

In the second half of the paper, Mr. Stresemann endeavours to trace the evolution of these various forms from what he regards as the primitive stock of the species, namely *C. c. hassi*, the form found in northern China, whence he believes it spread northwards to Manchuria and Japan, south-westwards to India and Ceylon, and south-eastwards

to Australia. The most important characters used for distinguishing the various races are the colour of the iris, the colour of the bases of the feathers, and the size. These and the effects of climate and temperature are all discussed, and the general conclusion is reached that those forms inhabiting plateaus and mountain-ranges are, as a rule, larger than those inhabiting less elevated and warmer regions.

*Swarth on the Bewick Wren.*

[The Pacific Coast Races of the Bewick Wren. By Harry A. Swarth. Proc. Cal. Acad. Sci. (4) vi. 1916, pp. 53-85, pl. 2.]

Bewick's Wren is an abundant species throughout the warmer parts of the United States and Mexico. East of the Rocky Mountains, as is so often the case, there is very little subspecific variation. In the west, however, especially on the Pacific Coast, owing doubtless to the great variation in humidity, a number of subspecific forms can be distinguished, varying from the dark short-tailed *calophonus* of British Columbia and Washington to the pale long-tailed *churienturus* of southern California.

Mr. Swarth has had over 500 examples of Bewick's Wren under examination, and distinguishes five mainland and three island races, whose ranges are shown in a distribution-map and inter-relationships exhibited in a diagnostic table.

The whole paper is a very good example of the thorough methods of the modern American school, and is distinguished by its clarity of thought and expression.

*Thorburn's 'British Birds.'*

[British Birds, written and illustrated by H. Thorburn, F.Z.S. In four volumes. Vol. iii. pp. vi+87, pls. 41-60. London (Longmans), 1916. 4to.]

The third volume of Thorburn's 'British Birds' contains the account of the Herons, Ducks, Doves, Game-birds, and Rails, and it is a great pleasure to turn over the beautiful plates he has prepared for it. The Game-birds and Ducks

have always been favourite subjects with Mr. Thorburn, and he has succeeded admirably with them; we would specially commend his pictures of the Capercaillie and the Pheasants, both of which are depicted with a snowy background. In the case of the Pheasants the Mongolian, Chinese Ring-necked, and Japanese are represented, as well as the old original English race, which is supposed to have been brought from Colchis on the Black Sea. To our mind the Ducks are too crowded to show off well, but this perhaps is inevitable if only a limited number of plates can be devoted to a large number of species.

#### *Witherby on Moult.*

[The Moults of the British Passeres, with Notes on the Sequence of their Plumages. By H. F. Witherby. *British Birds*, ix. 1915 & 1916, pp. 148-151, 167-176, 239-248, 314-316.]

A few years back Mr. Witherby and Dr. Ticehurst wrote on this subject, and now Mr. Witherby alone is continuing these investigations and proposes to review the moult and sequence of plumage in systematic order throughout the British Passeres. It seems a pity that he has not undertaken to do this in birds generally, but perhaps that is a task which is so vast and requires such an enormous series of specimens that it is at present impossible. The four parts here noticed deal with the Corvidæ, Sturnidæ, Oriolidæ, Fringillidæ, and Alaudidæ. In all these families the principal moult is the autumn one, and in the first three the effects of abrasion on the plumage are not very noticeable. Among the Finches we find some species which have a partial spring moult—in the Snow-Finch confined to the throat, and in some of the Buntings affecting certain parts of the head, throat, and breast. In this family, too, abrasion of the tips of the body-feathers often greatly alters the appearance of the birds, especially in late summer.

The Larks are remarkable in the fact that the young birds have a complete moult, including the wing- and tail-feathers, during the first autumn, and with this we find

among the Larks, as well as among some of the birds in which the first autumnal moult is complete, an interesting point. This is, that in the juvenile plumage the outer (bastard) primary of the wing is much larger and generally broader and less pointed than in the first winter and subsequent plumages.

We hope Mr. Witherby will be able to continue and complete these most interesting papers on the moult of British Birds.

### *British Birds.*

[British Birds: An illustrated Magazine devoted to the Birds on the British List. Vol. ix. June 1915 to May 1916.]

Our contemporary 'British Birds,' under the editorship of Mr. H. F. Witherby, continues to maintain its interest, and the recently completed volume contains much that will be gladly read by all ornithologists. Miss Maud Haviland has four articles on her experiences with the Grey Phalarope, the Asiatic Golden Plover, the Grey Plover, and the Lapland Bunting in the Yenesci Valley, where she recently spent a summer season. These are illustrated with photographs taken by herself.

Miss E. L. Turner, another of our more successful lady photographers, sends a series of articles on what she terms the "wait and see principle" of bird-photography. This consists of setting up tent or blind in some spot likely to be frequented by birds, and waiting with a camera inside to see what may turn up. By this method she has obtained some very characteristic photographs of various shy birds, many of which members of the British Ornithologists' Club will remember were exhibited on the screen at a recent meeting.

Mr. Eric B. Dunlop discusses what he terms the ovitegous habit of birds, by which we presume he means the habit which some birds have of commencing to incubate before the full clutch of eggs is laid. This he finds by observation to be a characteristic of the American Crow, the Ringbill Gull, and Caspian Tern. He believes that it conduces to

the greater safety of the eggs, and that in many other cases where an open nest is used the female, before leaving the nest, covers the eggs.

Another article of considerable interest is that of Miss Annie Jackson on the moults of the British Ducks. She again insists on the impossibility of "repigmentation" of feathers and that all changes of colour are due to either moult or wear. She also finds that the female surface-feeding Ducks have a complete body-moult in spring and that the underlying down is also shed and a new special down acquired. In the male birds the spring moult is most unusual. These facts, if not altogether new, are but little known, and Miss Jackson's account of the moult is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the subject.

As many as six new forms are added to the British list in the present volume. These are *Luscinola melanopogon*, *Hypolais pallida*, *Cenanthe leucura syenitica*, *Puffinus assimilis boydi*, *Puffinus kuhlii borealis*, and *Tringa incana*. All have been taken at or near Hastings in Sussex, whence come an unfailing supply of novelties, due to the energetic researches of Messrs. Ford-Lindsay, Parkin, and Nichols.

Mr. Witherby's papers on the moult of British Passeres and on the 'British Birds' marking-scheme have already been noticed in our pages, but an interesting note of his in the April number informs us of a third example of a Swallow marked in England being taken in South Africa. In this case the bird was ringed at Lytham in Lancashire on July 3, 1915, and was picked up dead near Grahamstown in the Cape Province on February 6, 1916, by Mr. S. G. Amin.

### *The Emu.*

[The Emu. Official Organ of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union. Vol. xv. July 1915 to April 1916.]

The last completed volume of 'The Emu' contains a great deal of interesting matter, and in the present short notice we can only mention a few of the more important articles. Dr. R. W. Shufeldt leads off the first number with an account of the osteology of the Stone-Plover, *Orthorhamphus*

*magnirostris*, which is described at length and illustrated by seven photographic plates taken by himself. Dr. Shufeldt considers that there is little or no ground for the alleged close relationship of the Stone-Plovers and the Bustards, but that the Stone-Plovers bridge the gap between the Plovers and the Gulls. A second article deals with the osteology of Harris's Flightless Cormorant (*Nannopterum harrisi*), of the Galapagos Is. Dr. Shufeldt asserts that the claim of this Cormorant to generic distinction rests solely on the modifications of the skeleton due to the loss of flight. A third article deals with the eggs of birds as compared with those of reptiles and is of a general nature.

There are a number of excellent field-notes, generally illustrated with photographs of the nests and eggs, of various Australian birds; among them are those of Mr. A. W. Swindells on the nesting-places of *Phalacrocorax gouldi* on the steep and inaccessible cliffs of the Tasmanian coast, of Miss Fletcher on the nesting of the Black Cormorant (*P. carbo*) along a Tasmanian river, of Mr. A. H. Chisholm on the Yellow-fronted Shrike-Tit (*Falcunculus frontatus*) in Victoria, and of Mr. S. A. Hanscombe on the Night-Heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) in New South Wales.

Mr. H. L. White has rediscovered the rare form of the Rosella Parrot (*Platycercus splendidus*) on the borders of New South Wales and Queensland, and gives some account of its distribution and that of its better-known congener, *P. eximius*. The first-named seems to have been lost sight of since Gould described it in 1845.

The only new forms we find described in the present volume are two new Petrels, or perhaps more correctly Shearwaters, recently discovered on the coast of New South Wales by Mr. A. F. Basset Hull. These are *Cinathisma cyanoleuca*, gen. et sp. n., and *Neonectris tenuirostris gratianus*, subsp. n. We venture to doubt whether the first-named form is sufficiently distinct to warrant the introduction of a new generic name as distinct from *Puffinus*, but about this it is difficult to make a positive assertion unless one has an opportunity of examining the original specimen.

A new or comparatively new feature of 'The Emu' is the introduction of coloured plates. Two of these are given in the present volume, illustrating *Macgillivrayornis claudi*, a new Honey-eater from the Cape York Peninsula, recently described by Mr. Mathews, and *Pæcilodryas albigularis*, a Shrike-Robin, described some years ago by Lord Rothschild and Dr. Hartert, also from Cape York.

Under the auspices of the R. A. O. U., Mr. Wilson announces that it is proposed to start a "bird-ringing" scheme for Australia. Up to now very little work appears to have been accomplished in this direction among Australian ornithologists, and we wish the scheme every success and hope that it will throw some much needed light on the problems involved.

Another scheme in contemplation is the preparation of a new official check-list of Australian birds by a Committee of the R. A. O. U. The first edition (see 'Ibis,' 1913, p. 699) was unfortunately based on ideas, so far as nomenclature is concerned, which are hardly consonant with the generally accepted principles, not only those of the International Code, but also those of the earlier zoologists who accepted the Stricklandian Code. The new edition is as we understand to be based on the 'List of British Birds' recently published by the B. O. U., and we naturally feel that no better model could be selected. We shall look forward eagerly to see the completion of this work.

#### *The International Commission on Nomenclature.*

[Opinions rendered by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. Opinion 67, pp. 177-182. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, Publ. no. 2409, April 1916.]

Some time ago (see 'Ibis,' 1914, p. 171) the International Commission on Zoological Literature prepared a list of 189 generic names of birds, which they hoped might be accepted as fixed by the majority of working ornithologists. Copies of this list were circulated among about 350 zoologists and zoological institutions for criticism and opinion. Out of the 189 generic names submitted, objections were raised

against 87. To the remaining 102 no objection of any kind has been offered. These generic names are now reprinted in the present publication, and we may hope that, so far as these names are concerned, no further alteration will be necessary.

Such names as *Charadrius* and *Colymbus*, about which controversy has arisen, do not appear in the present list, but are reserved for the further opinion of the special Advisory Committee on the Nomenclature of Birds.

If this Committee are able to impress their opinion in regard to the controverted names on ornithologists generally so that they can be universally accepted, a great stride forward in the matter of a fixed nomenclature will be established.

#### *Messenger Ornithologique.*

[*Messenger Ornithologique.* Sixième Année, 1915. Moscow.]

The volume of the Russian Ornithological Journal for 1915 contains a number of articles of undoubted interest, but unfortunately, except in a very few cases, they are written in Russian, and it is impossible to give here more than a summary of the titles.

Of faunal papers the editor, G. I. Poljakov, writes on the birds of Ussuri-land in the extreme eastern part of Russian Asia. Two new subspecies are described, *Perdix daurica sushkini* and *Bubo bubo ussuriensis*. N. A. Sarudny continues his account of the Avifauna of Turkestan; A. I. Tugarinov contributes an article on the birds of the Minusinsk district on the borders of the Altai Region; E. S. Ptouchenko writes on the Avifauna of the Kouban Province in south-east Russia; P. & J. Zalesski on that of the Tomsk district; and B. M. Shitkow and S. G. Schtecher on that of the Commander Islands of the Pacific. This last is illustrated with photographs of nests and nesting-sites.

Prof. Sushkin, whose papers have an English summary appended, gives an account of a trip he made in 1914 with



his wife and two students to the Russian Altai and north-western Mongolia. Twelve hundred bird-skins were brought back; a list of these is given along with a review of the local zoological regions.

Other new species and subspecies described are as follows:—

*Sitta europæa sztolcmani* Domaniewski, p. 142;

*Jynx torquilla harterti* and *Bombycilla garrulus centralasia*

Poljakow, pp. 135, 137, from the Altai;

*Bubo bubo zaissanensis* Hachlow, p. 224;

*Sterna hirundo turkestanensis* Sarudny, p. 226;

*Carduelis carduelis colchicus* Kondashew, p. 313;

*Muscicapa atricapilla sibirica* Chachlow, p. 315.

Other papers are by J. Domaniewski on *Cyanistes cyanus* and its relations to *C. pleskei*; by K. Gréve on feral birds in the Zoological Gardens at Riga; by N. A. Sarudny on the status of *Pica pica bactriana*; and by P. Sushkin on the status of *Falco lorenzi* Menzb., which he regards as identical with *F. altaicus* of the same author, *lorenzi* being the adult and *altaicus* a dark individual in its second plumage; but the oldest name is *F. altaicus*.

A number of papers by Prof. Buturlin in the present volume have already been noticed ('Ibis,' 1915, p. 786).

### *Revue Française d'Ornithologie.*

[Revue Française d'Ornithologie, Scientifique et Pratique. 7<sup>e</sup> Année, nos. 69-80. Jan.-Dec., 1915.]

We have recently received from M. Menegaux, the courteous Editor of the French Ornithological Journal, the numbers for last year, and we will endeavour briefly to give a list of the more important contents.

The first article in the January number is one by Dr. Millet-Horsin on the Birds-of-Prey met with by him at Dakar in French West Africa. The same author also writes an interesting account of a native myth in regard to the Hornbill, *Ceratogymna elata*, and a further contribution

on the birds of Lemnos as observed by him when taking part with his regiment in the Gallipoli Expedition last year. Other faunal lists are by M. A. Engl on birds collected by him during two journeys to British India; MM. II. and A. Vaucher on the birds of Morocco, from Tangier to Mogador; M. J. Loranchet on the birds of Kerguelen, where observations were made on twenty out of the twenty-one birds recorded breeding there; and by M. P. Bédé on the birds of Sfax in Tunisia.

Faunal papers relating to France include one by M. Corsimault on the singing birds of Vendôme, with musical scores of their songs; by M. J. l'Hermitte on the birds of Provence; and by the Comte de Tristan on birds observed at the Belgian front in the Nieuport Dunes. It appears that the war and the noise of the guns have had but little effect on bird-life.

M. Menegaux has recently received from Meraké, in southern New Guinea, a curious Bird-of-Paradise which combines the characters of *Paradisea raggiana* and *P. novæ-guineæ* in about equal proportions, and which he believes must be a natural hybrid. There are somewhat similar examples from the same neighbourhood in the Tring Museum.

The "crôule" of the Snipe is discussed by M. de la Fuye. This is a chasing and circling flight of both sexes, which takes place at dusk during the spring months and is probably connected with courtship. It appears to correspond to what is known in England as the "drumming" of Snipe, though the curious sounds made are not mentioned. Another more extensive paper by the same author deals at length with the Common, Double, and Jack Snipes and their migrations, the lines of which are plotted on a map of Europe.

In a short note M. Chapal confirms some previous records of the fact that the Rock-Martin (*Riparia rupestris*) winters in some of the sheltered ravines of the mountains of the Dépt. Gard in the south of France; and, finally, M. L. Ternier writes at length on the economics of the Starling, a bird protected by law in France, and finds that it does an

immense amount of damage especially among the cherry-orchards in the summer. He concludes that steps should be taken in certain districts at any rate to reduce their numbers. Fruit-growers in other parts of the world, even in South Africa, where the Starling has been introduced and has spread very quickly, have had the same experience.

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*List of other Ornithological Publications received.*

- CHERRIE, G. K. Some apparently undescribed Birds from the Collection of the Roosevelt South American Expedition. Bull. Am. Mus. N. H. xxxv. art. 17, 1916.
- GURNEY, J. H. Ornithological Report for Norfolk (1915). Zoologist, 1916.
- SHUFELDT, R. W. Some Cardinal and Owl Notes. ("Guide to Nature," ix. Sound Beach, Conn., 1916.)
- WHITE, S. A. In the Far North-West. (Adelaide, 1916.)
- The Auk. (Vol. xxxiii. Nos. 1-3. Cambridge, Mass., 1916.)
- Avicultural Magazine. (Third Series, Vol. vii. Nos. 9-11. London, 1916.)
- Bird Notes. (New Series, Vol. vii. Nos. 7-9. Ashbourne, 1916.)
- British Birds. (Vol. x. Nos. 2-4. London, 1916.)
- Canada, Geol. Survey. Summary Report for 1915. (Ottawa, 1916.)
- The Condor. (Vol. xviii. Nos. 3, 4. Hollywood, Cal., 1916.)
- The Irish Naturalist. (Vol. xxv. Nos. 6-9. Dublin, 1916.)
- Revue Française d'Ornithologie. (Nos. 88, 89. Orléans, 1916.)
- The Scottish Naturalist. (Nos. 55-57. Edinburgh, 1916.)
- South Australian Ornithologist. (Vol. ii. pt. 7. Adelaide, 1916.)

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XXXIV.—*Letters, Extracts, and Notes.*

**Food of the Peregrine.**

SIR,—Field-naturalists must have read with amazement Capt. Collingwood Ingram's statement ('Ibis,' p. 523) that Rooks are probably quite immune from the attacks of the Peregrine in a wild state. I live within easy reach of fifteen eyries, and find when visiting the "plucking places" that Rooks largely compose the bill-of-fare.